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Medium-term plan for the period 2002-2005

Note by the Secretariat

I. Background

1. The medium-term plan is a translation of legislative mandates into programmes and subprogrammes. It constitutes the principal policy directive of the United Nations.

2. The medium-term plan is prepared in accordance with the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation (ST/SGB/PPBME Rules/1 (1987)) established by the General Assembly. Each plan covers a four-year period and is presented in programmes and subprogrammes. Each programme contains a narrative that identifies the mandates that provide overall direction for the programme. Each subprogramme contains a narrative that reflects all mandated activities and identifies objectives and accomplishments during the plan period.

3. Each narrative is to be approximately one page in length. Its format has been established by the Programme Planning and Budget Division of the Secretariat and consists of the following elements: overall orientation, mandates providing strategic direction, expected accomplishments by the end of 2005, organizational unit responsible for implementation and programme objectives.

4. The Secretariat has begun preparation of the medium-term plan for the period 2002-2005. The Secretary-General's proposed medium-term plan will be submitted to the Committee for Programme and Coordination in June 2000 and subsequently to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session.

* E/CN.15/1999/1.

5. The programmes and subprogrammes of the proposed medium-term plan are to be reviewed by the relevant sectoral, functional and regional intergovernmental bodies prior to their examination by the Committee for Programme and Coordination.

6. Accordingly, the proposed medium-term plan for the period 2002-2005 will be included in the proposed agenda of the ninth session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in 2000 and the text of the proposed programme narrative on crime prevention and criminal justice will be available to the Commission at that session.

7. The purpose of the present note is to draw the attention of the Commission to the preparation of the medium-term plan for the period 2002-2005 at the earliest stage of its preparation, to initiate consultation and to seek its views on the content of the programme narrative on crime prevention and criminal justice, based on the preliminary outline provided in chapter II below, so that those views can be taken into account in preparing the proposed text to be finalized by the Secretariat in early 2000.

II. Preliminary outline for the programme narrative on crime prevention and criminal justice

Overall orientation of the programme

8. Crime has a direct negative impact on sustainable socio-economic development and on the quality of life of people in general. Maintaining the rule of law and administering justice fairly and efficiently are cornerstones of democracy and development. With increasing globalization and technological progress, new forms of crime and new dimensions in crime prevention emerge that necessitate cooperative action by Member States in order for the latter to be successful in combating them. Consequently, the overall orientation of the programme is to promote effective international cooperation in crime prevention and criminal justice matters in general and to provide assistance to Governments in addressing them and, especially, changing crime trends and challenges, such as those posed by transnational crime.

Mandate

9. The mandate for the programme lies in the responsibilities entrusted to the Secretariat by the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and its Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. Most recently, those responsibilities have been defined by the General Assembly in its resolutions 46/152 of 18 December 1991 on the creation of an effective United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice programme and 49/158 of 23 December 1994 on strengthening the United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice programme, particularly its technical cooperation capacity. [*Reference to be included to resolutions that may be adopted in 1999 and 2000, especially on the United Nations convention against transnational organized crime, and the recommendations emanating from the Tenth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, as approved by the General Assembly.*]

Expected accomplishments by the end of 2005

10. There will be increased understanding of crime trends and emerging challenges in crime prevention and criminal justice, improved expertise for Member States to draw upon and enhanced international cooperation in addressing crime prevention and criminal justice concerns that require a concerted international response. Specifically, Member States will have received timely and effective assistance upon request to deal with new crime challenges, especially transnational organized crime, trafficking in human beings, economic and financial crimes and corruption. The United Nations convention on transnational organized crime and its related protocols will have been ratified and significant progress made in implementing their provisions. Coordinated global strategies and legal instruments will be in place to deal with economic crimes and corruption. Further progress will have been achieved in the use and application of United Nations standards and norms in crime prevention and criminal justice and technical assistance will have been provided to Governments upon request with a view to establishing efficient criminal justice systems and the rule of law. The international community will have received the required technical and secretariat support for policy dialogue and the development of common strategies.

Organizational unit responsible for implementing the programme

11. The Centre for International Crime Prevention of the Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention will be responsible for implementing the programme.

Objectives

12. The programme will pursue the following four major objectives:

(a) *Promotion of coordinated joint and individual action by Member States in responding to new forms of crime and new dimensions in crime prevention and criminal justice*. Fighting transnational organized crime will be a priority. Measures will be pursued to facilitate implementing the provisions of the United Nations convention on transnational organized crime and its related protocols, by providing assistance in required areas. As relevant, support will be provided for developing additional protocols. Work already undertaken in preventing trafficking in human beings will be further built upon. Another closely related area of focus will be the fight against economic and financial crimes and corruption, for which the development and implementation of coordinated global strategies and legal instruments will be pursued. A third area of focus will be the analysis of emerging trends, the formulation of policy and programme options and the development and provision of expertise for dealing with them;

(b) *Promotion of the rule of law, fair and efficient criminal justice systems and effective crime prevention*. Activities of the programme will continue to promote the application and use of United Nations standards and norms in criminal justice and crime prevention, the cornerstones of humane and effective criminal justice systems, which in turn are basic requisites for fighting new crime trends and challenges. The development and implementation of effective strategies and policies for preventing crime will continue to be fostered and assistance will be provided in establishing efficient criminal justice systems and the rule of law;

(c) *Provision of advisory services and technical assistance to Governments upon request in the area of crime prevention and criminal justice*. The programme will provide expert assistance both in dealing with new forms of crime and new dimensions in crime prevention, including support for implementing new conventions and protocols, and in establishing efficient criminal justice systems and the rule of law. Appropriate national, regional or global projects will be designed and executed and resources mobilized for their implementation. Continued attention will be given to strengthening the programme's operational capacity and to achieving maximum synergy in its actions with other relevant actors, in particular the United Nations International Drug Control Programme, the United Nations Development Programme and other bodies of the United Nations system. Special efforts will be made to raise funds for project implementation;

(d) *Support for global policy development in crime prevention and criminal justice*. The programme will continue to serve as a forum for policy dialogue and the development of common strategies in dealing with crime prevention and criminal justice. In that context, it will provide technical and secretariat services for the related intergovernmental bodies, in particular the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and its Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice.